industrial effluent. It uses an indigenously manufactured commercial membrane.

NF technique is found to be useful for purifying raw water containing total dissolved solids (TDS) in the range 700-1200 ppm. It allows sufficient permeation of essential salts while keeping TDS below 500 ppm in accordance with BIS drinking water standards and can be operated at low pressure.

Studies carried out on pilot plant with 1 m^2 membrane area, 700ppm feed TDS and an operating pressure of 100 psi (7.0 Kg/cm^2), showed that NF gave a flow of 40 l/h of purified water free of virus/bacteria with 50% reduction in TDS.

(c) and (d) It is estimated that NF operation and maintenance cost is Paise 3.3 per liter for a plant capacity of 1000 l/h and Paise 1.5 per litre for a plant capacity of 5000 l/h. The estimates exclude capital investment, which would approximately be Rs. 1.5 lakh for a plant of capacity 200 l/h, Rs. 3.75 lakh for 1000I/h and Rs. 8.0 lakh for 5000 l/h.

National Science Research Fund for Scientific Research

680. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is **a** fact that a proposal has been formulated to set up a National Science Research Fund for promoting scientific research; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the sources of funding decided therefor, and the present status of its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) A recommendation has been made by the Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (SAC-PM) for setting up an autonomous National Science and Engineering Research Foundation for promoting and funding scientific research. A proposal for such an autonomous structure is presently at the stage of inter-ministerial consultations.